

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6708

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDIP, US, KS
SUBJECT: THE KIM DONG-JO DIALOGUE

REF: STATE 192107

1. THERE SEEMS TO BE A DIFFERENCE OF PERCEPTION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND POST AS TO THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF KOM DONG JO DIALOGUE NOW UNDERWAY WITH THE ROKG -- PARTLY PERHAPS BECAUSE I HAVE NOT BEEN CLEAR ENOUGH IN SOME OF OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS. IN PARTICULAR WE ARE CONCERNED OVER THE CONTENT AND FORM EXPECTED FOR THE OFFICIAL ROKG POSITION ON KIM DONG JO'S RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS AND OVER THE PROVISION OF NAMES DESIRED PRIVATELY FROM KIM DONG JO. WE ALSO QUESTION THE POSSIBLE RESULT OF FURTHER ASSURANCES TO KCIA.

2. DEPARTMENT'S REFTTEL SUGGESTS THAT WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE ROKG IS AN OFFICIAL POSITION IN WRITING, WHICH CAN BE MADE PUBLIC, AND WHICH WILL GIVE FORMAL ASSURANCES THAT WHAT KIM DONG JO WILL SAY WILL BE HELPFUL TO THE ETHICS COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS AND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. THIS IS, IN FACT, THE ORIGINAL JAWORSKI REQUEST WHICH THE ROKG HAS REJECTED.

3. WHAT I HAD BEEN WORKING ON, WITH WHAT I THOUGHT TO
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BE DEPARTMENT APPROVAL, WAS AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT, PROBABLY ORAL, FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO ME WHICH COULD BE PASSED TO PPE DEPARTMENT FOR USE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CONGRESS. I AM QUITE SURE THAT THE ROKG WOULD NOT WANT SUCH A POSITION MADE PUBLIC PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF A CONGRESSIONAL REACTION. THE FOREIGN MINISTER POSITION, IF IT COMES, WILL PROBABLY STATE THAT KIM DONG JO HAS SAID HE WILL ANSWER

CONGRESSIONAL QUESTIONS FULLY. IT MAY ALSO INCLUDE A STATEMENT THAT THE ROKG WILL UNDERTAKE TO ENCOURAGE KIM DONG JO TO DO SO. SINCE THE ROKG MAINTAINS THAT IT KNOWS OF NO IMPROPRIETY ON THE PART OF ITS FORMER AMBASSADOR, IT IS UNLIKELY TO GO BEYOND THIS QTE BEST EFFORTS UNQTE TYPE OF RESPONSE.

4. WITH RESPECT TO KIM DONG JO PROVIDING NAMES IN ADVANCE OF QUESTIONS AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE, I THINK THIS IS MOST UNLIKELY. FONMIN HAS KNOCKED THIS IDEA AS INCONSISTENT WITH THE REACTIVE NATURE OF WHAT MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ROKG; AND I HAVE FOUND IT HARD TO DEFEND IN THE FACE OF US JUDICIAL PROCEDURES IF KIM DONG JO CAN BE ENCOURAGED TO DISTINGUISH AMONG THE 20 SUSPECTED PEOPLE, I AM CONVINCED WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND PROVIDE THE BUFFER OF A SERIES OF QUESTIONS.

5. DAMAGE HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE TO OUR KCIA CHANNEL BY THE MENTION OF FORMER WASHINGTON STATION CHIEF AND HIS DEPUTY. AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL, EARLY ON IN THIS MATTER INTEREST WAS SHOWN BY THE HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEE STAFFS IN THESE TWO INDIVIDUALS. THE KOREANS STILL SUSPECT WE -- OR AT LEAST THE CONGRESS -- ARE PEELING AN ONION. FURTHER MENTION OF THE MATTER NOW, EVEN TO ASSURE THAT NO FURTHER ACTION WILL BE TAKEN, CAN ONLY SERVE TO CONFIRM OUR INTEREST TO KCIA.

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6. FINALLY, STEPPING BACK BY JAWORSKI AND DEPARTURE OF WHITE MAY CONFUSE ISSUE IN KOREAN MIND, CAUSING THEM TO WAIT AND DETERMINE POSITION OF REMAINING STAFF BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER. THE IMPACT OF FAVORABLE ACTION BY THE HOUSE ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE WILL BE HARDER TO PREDICT. IT WILL HAVE THE HELPFUL EFFECT OF REDUCING THE ELEMENT OF DURESS, BUT IT WILL ALSO REDUCE THE PRESSURE FOR RAPID ACTION.

7. COMMENT: I FEEL THAT I AM RATHER FAR OUT ON A LIMB ON THIS MATTER AND WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION THAT WHAT I HAVE BEEN PUSHING FOR AND EXPECT TO RECEIVE (PARA 3) WILL BE USEFUL. AN UNDERTAKING BY THE ROKG TO PROVIDE BEST EFFORTS TO SEE THAT KIM DONG JO ANSWERS FULLY AND FORTHRIGHTLY WOULD SEEM -- FROM THE SEOUL PERSPECTIVE -- TO BE A MAJOR STEP FORWARD.

8. IF THE DEPARTMENT THINKS OTHERWISE, I SHOULD BE ADVISED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT I CAN BACK THE CAT DOWN AND ATTEMPT SOME RE-DIRECTION. I WOULD MUCH PREFER THE EMBARRASSMENT OF REVERSING DIRECTION AT THIS POINT THAN TO ALLOW THE ROKG TO PRODUCE SOMETHING WHICH WOULD BE

REJECTED OUT OF HAND.

9. I WILL BE MAKING A CALL ON KCIA DIRECTOR KIM JAE KYU
AT 1000 TOMORROW, AUGUST 1 (SEOUL TIME), AND WOJLD
APPRECIATE CLARIFICATION PRIOR TO THAT TIME.
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